

 **Norvel Hayes**

How to get

**YOUR
Prayers
ANSWERED**

How To Get Your Prayers Answered

Have you ever wondered why your prayers aren't answered even though you have prayed for months, or sometimes years?

I used to wonder about this myself. I would say, "I don't understand You, Jesus. Why don't You answer my prayer? I've got to have this, but it's not coming to pass. Why don't You answer my prayer?"

One day as I was reading the Bible, the Lord began to bring this message into focus. He began to unfold it right before me. Today I can see it so plain—just as if it had always been a part of me.

How To Approach God

The Lord is so good to us. He gives us different ways to approach Him and different ways to receive things from Him. What I am going to share with you here is one of the most important truths in the Bible, and it's actually one of the easiest ways I know of to receive things from the Lord.

Many people won't go to God until the very foundation of their life has crumbled before them. Then because they have no place else to go, they go to God.

This is one of the best times for God to get hold of a person's life—when the circumstances of his life have crumbled and his heart is broken. God would like to get hold of us before that, but most people just won't go to God until they have to. They want to figure out everything for themselves.

If we will go to God with an open heart, ready to receive, He will be able to come into our lives and do what He wants to do with us.

The Bible says that God will reward those that diligently seek Him. (Heb. 11:6.) You can't seek God just a little bit and expect to find all the "goodies" from heaven. They don't come that way. Your prayers will never be answered that way. You will have to diligently seek Him.

The most important thing is *how* you ask God for something—the kind of words you use when you speak to Him. When you pray, you are not talking to me, or to the pastor of your church, or to a friend—you are talking to Jesus.

He doesn't look at you from the outside, but from the inside. He doesn't hold your past sins against you. (The devil does, but Jesus doesn't.)

Be Sincere

Because He looks on the motives of your heart, you have to approach Him in the right way. You have to be sincere. Jesus said, ... *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh* (Matt. 12:34). When you start talking, Jesus will know right away the condition of your heart.

Many times, Jesus doesn't like the way we pray.

You may say, "But I'm humble when I pray. Sometimes when I pray, I even get on my knees and cry."

That doesn't make any difference. Jesus still won't answer your prayer if you pray wrong.

Hear and Understand

Let's look at the book of St. Matthew, chapter 15, beginning with the 10th verse:

And he (Jesus) called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

Many people are offended when they hear the Gospel straight from the pages of the New Testament. They are offended when you tell them what the New Testament says about speaking in tongues. They say, "We don't teach that in our church," but it doesn't make any difference what they teach in their church. It's what the Bible says that's the truth, not what anybody teaches in a church.

The disciples said, "You offended them, Jesus."

In verse 13, He answered them and said, *Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.* You can have all kinds of teaching in you, but unless God planted it there, it won't do you any good.

You might as well get rid of everything that's not in the New Testament—regardless of how many relatives you have who believe it that way. Just go ahead and read the New Testament for yourself. Believe what you read and act on it. You can receive it from Almighty God yourself.

It won't do you any good to go around and find out what everybody else believes. If you do, you'll hear 40,000 tales—and all of them will be different!

But God's Word won't change. It won't change because God doesn't change. Jesus stays the same all the time, and His Word stays the same. Every morning when you pick up the New Testament, it will be the same. It stays steadfast all the time, and it works all the time.

What does Jesus have to say about people who are offended by His Word? *"Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up."*

Then in the 14th verse He says of the Pharisees, *Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.*

Is that plain enough?

Jesus was saying to His disciples, "If they are offended at My sayings, let them alone. Stay away from them. They are blind. If you mess around with them, you'll be blind, too. You won't be able to see, and both of you will fall into the ditch."

Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable (v. 15).

In other words, "Explain this parable, Jesus. Tell us what You mean."

And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? In other words, "What's the matter with you guys? You've been with Me for a long time—don't you understand yet?"

You know, I believe most of us are just like Peter. We are yet without understanding. I imagine if Jesus walked into a church service these days, He would probably say something like this: "You people are robbing yourselves. Are you yet without understanding of all the things in the New Testament that are for you? Are you yet without understanding of all the things I've told you in My Word?"

You could ask Him all kinds of questions, but He would always answer you with a scripture and say, "I've told you in My Word." It's not good enough for us just to be hearers of the Word. God wants us to be doers of the Word, not hearers only. (James 1:22.)

Speak the Word

In verses 17 and 18 Jesus says:

Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart.

What shape is *your* heart in?

How have *you* been talking?

Have you been talking faith, or have you been talking doubt?

Have you been talking love, or have you been talking in a way that the love of God can't work?

Jesus said,

Those things, which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon (vv. 18-21).

It's not what you eat that defiles you, but what you say. It's what comes out your mouth that causes all the trouble in

your life and discourages you from receiving from Almighty God.

Check Your Motives

Verse 22 says,

And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

Her daughter was possessed by devils, so she approached Jesus for help.

Do you know what it's like to live in a house with someone who is possessed with devils? It isn't pleasant. I don't care how much you love that person from the natural standpoint, it still isn't pleasant. When you love Jesus and want to give your life to Him, it isn't pleasant to hear someone close to you curse God and act like the devil himself.

This woman who approached Jesus knew exactly what that was like. She cried out,

"Have mercy on me, O Lord; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil."

Verse 23 says, *But he answered her not a word.* Jesus wouldn't even talk to her.

Does that surprise you?

Don't you think that was a very humble way for her to approach the Lord? She came crying to Him, but He wouldn't even talk to her. He wouldn't pay any attention to her.

Why?

Because her motives were wrong.

She was crying, "Have mercy on *me*, Lord," not, "Have mercy on my daughter."

Jesus looked on her heart as she cried, "Have mercy on *me*, Lord. I'm living in torment because my daughter is vexed with a devil."

Jesus didn't answer. He wouldn't even talk to her.

What does the Bible say He did?

He answered her not a word. In everyday language, that means He wasn't even talking to her. She was praying selfishly and Jesus wouldn't listen to her.

Let me ask you a question: Are you a parent with a wayward child—a child who doesn't know the Lord?

Here Jesus gives you the secret to getting your child back in tune with Him. Now if you don't do it, it won't be Jesus' fault. It won't be anybody's fault but yours.

You have probably spent many hours, praying for your child. When he first started going against your teachings, I'm sure you felt like all the blood had been drained out of your body. You probably felt like a failure. I know how you felt because I've been there. Sometimes you really feel sorry for yourself.

The only reason your child is wayward is because of the power of the devil. The only reason your child is like that is because the devil has tempted him and led him astray. It doesn't make any difference whether he is involved in drinking or dope or sex. In any case, the devil has taken over and caused your child to be separated from God.

You've prayed and cried and wept. You can't understand why God won't answer your prayers. Why won't He answer? Maybe your motive is wrong.

When you ask Jesus for something selfishly—if you have only yourself in mind when you pray—He won't give it to you.

Maybe you are living in torment. Maybe you are being buffeted by something and want to be released from it. When you pray, God looks inside you and sees your heart. It is no trouble for Him to look inside you; He made every part of you. He is interested in you, and He knows whether or not you are interested in making Him your God.

Spend Time With God

The number one thing God wants is to be your God and have you be His people. It would be so easy to receive things

from God if you would open yourself to Him and let Him do what He wants in your life.

If you want to please the heart of God, place yourself before Him and let Him work His perfect will in your life. Just be like putty in His hands.

Sometimes you need to shut yourself off from "religious activities." Sometimes you need to shut yourself off from witnessing and teaching. Just go to God when no one else is around.

You shouldn't spend all your time going to meetings. You need to spend time loving and worshipping God, telling Him how much you love Him.

Don't allow yourself to get caught up in religious activities without putting Jesus first place in your life and worshipping Him when you are alone in your prayer closet. Don't let any work—I don't care what it is—take so much of your time that you aren't able to shut yourself off from it to worship Jesus. If you do, you'll cut yourself off from the blessings of Almighty God.

The more time you spend in your prayer closet, worshipping Jesus, the better warrior you'll be when you get outside.

Let God Be #1

So often we run around in our own religious Christian life, doing this and that at the church, trying to help people; but we don't spend any time alone with God. It's like we are partly lying to the people. We tell them how important Jesus is in our lives, yet He really isn't occupying that number one spot. Sometimes our God is religion and church, not Him.

God doesn't want your duty to be number one in your life. He wants to be number one. Don't push Him over to the side and do all the work for God without taking time to worship Him. If you do, you are lying—to yourself and to Him.

You can work for Jesus 15 hours a day, but if you don't take the time to spend even 15 or 20 minutes in private

worship of Him, you are lying to yourself. He really isn't your number one God.

We are supposed to worship the Lord with all our hearts. Luke 10:27 says,

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

Many times we miss God by getting our lives so involved in going to church and working for Jesus that we grieve His heart. I know we are going to be judged on the day of judgment by the works we do; but many people are trying to promote the Kingdom of God in the wrong way. They do it from an intellectual standpoint and from a labor standpoint. God is not pleased with that.

Let Him Love You

One day as I had just finished taping some radio broadcasts, the Spirit of the Lord came upon me in a sudden manifestation. During that time the Lord revealed to me what was wrong with the world. These were the words He said to me that day: "People make Me complicated. All I want them to do is let Me love them."

We don't let the Lord love us much. We're too busy. I get guilty of this myself. If you let the Lord love you, then His love can go from you out to others. You can have more understanding and more patience about things when you let the Lord love you.

Many people might think, "Well, the Lord loves me anyway."

That's not what He is talking about.

If you would bow down to Him and worship Him in your prayer closet, then His power would come on you and melt your heart. He would begin to love you, and you would begin to love Him back.

All Jesus wants you to do is let Him love you. He wants to take you in His arms and love you. He wants to manifest Himself to you. He wants His pure love to flow down through

your body and into your mind, just as if you had taken a bath.

If you don't spend any time before Him, it's hard for Him to get you still long enough to love you. He loves all of us in a general love, but that's not good enough. He wants to boldly show you how much He loves you.

His love will melt you down until you can have compassion on drunks and thieves and prostitutes. With His love in you, you can see people in a different light. You can see what sin and the devil have done to them.

If you will let God love you, you won't always just go to Him with the big mountain in your life.

If you have been praying for things and not getting any answers, start letting Jesus love you. Start worshipping Him and loving Him, telling Him how you feel about Him:

"Jesus, You're the Lord of my life. I thank You that You died on the cross for me. I worship You, Jesus, and praise You because my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. I worship You, Jesus. I praise Your wonderful name. I hold Your name above all names that are on this earth."

It's a good thing to be involved with a church and with God's work; but the greatest thing you will ever do is shut yourself off from the world and spend time with Jesus— just you and Him. Jesus wants *you*— just you alone. Spend time worshipping Him, and you will learn more about His beauty than you have ever known.

Worship Has Rewards

This woman in the 15th chapter of Matthew had to learn these things the hard way. Again, verse 23 says,

He answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying,

Send her away; for she crieth after us.

But, of course, Jesus loved her. He knew she was in trouble. He didn't want to turn anybody away troubled, but she had to learn a lesson. You see, God has His own standards. We have to come His way; we can't come our way.

He answered His disciples and said,

I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel (v. 24).

Now notice her second approach to Jesus in the 25th verse: *Then came she and worshipped him.* She said, "I worship You, Jesus. I love You."

As she was worshipping Him, she was saying, *Lord, help me.* She knew there was help in Jesus.

There was no worship involved in her first approach—when she cried out, "Lord, have mercy on me." That was a selfish prayer. She wanted to be relieved of the thing that was causing her so much trouble. She wanted to be relieved, but there was no worship in her plea. That's why Jesus wouldn't talk to her.

But when she came the second time, she was worshipping Him as her God, and He found favor in what she was doing. When God finds favor in the way you believe and talk and act, He will move for you.

When she came to Jesus the second time, He gave her a little test to see how sincere she was. He wanted the right words to come out of her mouth. He wanted her to talk right.

Verse 26 says,

He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.

In other words, He was telling her, "I'm a Jew, and I came for the children of the house of Israel. You're out of a different coast, from a different tribe. It's not right for Me to cast the children's bread to dogs."

Then verse 27 says,

And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.

After she worships Him, she says, "Jesus, You are my Master, and I'm willing to eat even the crumbs that fall from my Master's table. I'm willing to take anything that you have to give me. I worship You, Jesus, because You are my Master."

Do you know what He did for her?

Verse 28 says,

Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

Jesus spoke the Word and it happened. The devil left her daughter, and she was made whole. Why? Because her mother pleased God.

Stand Steadfast In Faith

As a parent, you have spiritual authority over your child. It doesn't make any difference if your child rebels. I know because I went through this for a time with my daughter.

God dealt with me strongly about this one day. He said:

"Son, I want you to understand something: There is no power on earth greater than My power—no power!"

"Your daughter doesn't have the power and the faith to get out of the trouble she is in. It will have to be done by your faith in Me."

"I can set her completely free through your faith, but your faith concerning her has been wavering a little. You have started wondering about when I am going to do it. That is none of your business. I don't need your help. All I need is your faith. I have to have your faith before My power is even available to move on your child."

"Every time—not just part of the time, but every time—your faith wavers, it cuts off My power from dealing with her. You're her father, and your unwavering faith will bring My power out of heaven and upon her life to set her free."

"But your faith wavers from time to time concerning her complete freedom. Sometimes you even wonder if I am going to do it. When you waver, My power stops."

That's the reason Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith it is impossible to please God. You can't please God without faith. You *must* have faith. He wants you to recognize Him as your number one God. He wants you to know that He will work in your life. But to know that, you must spend time with Him and get to know Him.

If you will stand with an unwavering, steadfast faith, you can keep your child out of the hands of the devil. If your

child is away from God now, you can bring him back to God.

If you will spend time worshipping the Lord through faith, the devil can't destroy your child. There is no way the devil can destroy any of your children if you will follow the Lord and listen to His instructions.

Confession Brings Possession

When I was holding a meeting in one church, a woman suddenly stood up in the audience and challenged me. I had been telling them that God would do anything for them if they would let Him.

She said, "Brother Norvel, you've been telling us for two or three days how much the Lord loves us and that God would do anything for us. What about our situation? My husband and I have a 17-year-old daughter that we love with all our hearts. About six months ago she just walked off from the house one day and never came back.

"Brother Norvel, I've prayed and prayed and prayed. Doesn't God know where she is?"

I said, "Absolutely."

"Will He show me where she is?"

I said, "Sure, He'll show you where she is."

"Well, as I've been sitting here listening to you, I'm beginning to see something I've never seen before. I feel like God requires something of me other than what I've been doing."

"Well," I said, "your faith can bring her in. You can speak her back into existence, back into your presence. I'll teach you how to do it if you want me to."

"I'll do anything you say," she answered. "Just tell me what to do, and I'll do it."

"Okay."

Jesus said in Mark 11:23,

For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain,

Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those

things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

"Now, according to James 4:2,3, you have not because you ask not; and when you ask and receive not, it's because you ask amiss."

"I can imagine how the devil has treated you—how he has thrown darts of doubt into your mind about your daughter. He's probably told you over and over that she's been kidnapped and killed. He's probably told you all kinds of things."

She said, "Yes, he has. Sometimes I think she will call; then I'll begin to doubt and start thinking she's dead."

"Well, you can speak her back into your presence if you'll believe that those things which you say will come to pass. You can do it because this scripture says you can—and it's the truth. God can't lie."

"I'll pray with you; then I want you to say this every day: 'Thank You, Jesus, for showing me where my daughter is. Thank You, Jesus, for having her contact me.'"

"Don't ever say anything else. Just keep it up every day. Keep firing down that same line. Then God will move on her heart. He'll have her get in touch with you. Your faith in His Word will cause her to do this. Her soul can be rescued through your faith."

She said, "Okay, I'll do it."

A few months later, I was back there ministering, and that same lady stood up and said:

"You know what you told me, Brother Norvel, that if my faith didn't waver, the Lord would move on my daughter? Sometimes I would do that day after day after day. The devil tried to tell me it wouldn't work, that it was too simple, that my daughter was dead. But I wouldn't listen to him."

"Every time I got to the point where I was about to doubt, the Lord would remind me of what you told me. Those words would ring in my head and I would say, 'No! I'm not going to doubt! I'm not going to doubt!'"

"Then one day the phone rang, and it was my daughter on the phone! Not only that, but she was under conviction and crying. We drove over, picked her up, and brought her here to church. She gave her life to the Lord and Jesus baptized her in the Holy Ghost. She's sitting right over there."

When she told me that story, I was really blessed; but God added a bonus—a supernatural bonus. The Spirit of the Lord came on that young girl. She got out of her seat and walked very slowly up to me. She put her arms around my neck and just held on.

The Spirit of God was all over her. For about ten minutes, we just stood there together, weeping.

You know, all the money in the world can't buy that experience from me. It was glorious—an experience I will never forget.

Be A True Worshipper

Jesus said,

The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23,24).

If your prayers aren't getting answered, maybe you should check and see how much time you are spending before the Lord in worship and praise.

Set yourself to be a true worshipper. Put aside time for the Lord. Put Him first place in your life. If you do—I promise you—you will see your prayers answered.



Norvel Hayes shares God's Word boldly and simply, with an enthusiasm that captures the heart of the hearer. He has learned through personal experience that God's Word can be effective in every area of life, and that it will work for anyone who will believe it and apply it.

Norvel owns several businesses which function successfully despite the fact that he spends over half his time away from the office, ministering the Gospel throughout the country. His obedience to God and his willingness to share his faith has taken him to a variety of places. He ministers in churches, seminars, conventions, colleges, prisons — anywhere the Spirit of God leads.

HAVE YOUR PRAYERS GONE UNANSWERED?

You may have spent many hours praying. You may have prayed, wept and cried. Yet your prayers have gone unanswered.

If this is the condition of your prayer life, you will want to read this book.

Norvel Hayes shares the scriptures that the Lord revealed to him on how to get his prayers answered.

GOD LOOKS ON THE HEART

Come to God with an open heart, ready to receive. The number one thing God wants to do is to be your God and have you be His people. Learn how easy it is to receive things from God when you open your life to Him and let Him do what He wants to in your life.